

SPRIT OF THE PRESS.

Editorial Opinions of the Leading Journals Upon Current Topics—Compiled Every Day for the Evening Telegraph.

FATHER HYACINTHE IN AMERICA.

The moment the Porcino touched her wharf on Monday, Father Hyacinthe began to taste the bitterness of popularity. Until far into the night reporters for the newspapers dogged his footsteps, tried to talk with him in a tongue he could not understand, took inventory of his luggage, smelt of his dinner, and clamored at his chamber door. Nothing saved him from the persecution of a mob of interviewers but his sturdy refusal to admit them. Even when lovely woman bore the note-book and the pencil, she was turned away with polite messages of regret. A gentleman representing the Tribune was cordially received, and enjoyed a full hour's conversation with the distinguished ecclesiastic at the hotel; two reporters for other papers were allowed an interview of one or two minutes only; the others were not admitted. Battered Bohemians lounged all night in the lobby, stealing surreptitious peeps at the key-hole. They way-laid the pillars, and pounced from dark passages upon the chambermaid. They got from the servants what descriptions they could of the reverend gentleman's looks, garb, and appetite. It is said that the reporter of the World even bribed a waiter to change clothes with him, and so get access to the room under the flimsy pretext of a pitcher of ice-water; but as he did not understand French, the result of his experiment was not commensurate with its boldness. All these expedients of the great mob of the excluded must have filled the reverend father with terror and amazement. Great, too, must have been his astonishment the next morning, at the extraordinary instances of a correspondent of the World professing to write at sea on the Porcino, and quoting, amidst all, the Tribune's translation of the Carmelite General's letter, published only the day before. Terrible must have been his perplexity to find that, though he had spoken with only two members of the press besides the representative of the Tribune, eight or nine papers had full and particular accounts of special interviews, all different and contradictory.

Hunted and tortured in this awful manner, Father Hyacinthe, while he may be charitable enough to remember that his pursuers (if we may slightly vary the words of a distinguished novelist) "though exasperating to the feelings are actuated by professional dictates," will need all his resolution and all his patience to maintain the reserve that befits his present situation. If he applies to the leaders of a great liberal party within the Catholic Church, he will needlessly compromise himself and obstruct his course by premature eloquence in the lecture-room of the newspapers. If he prefers to attach himself to some Protestant denomination, his case will not be such a singular one that the general public will make him more than a nine-days' wonder. It is precisely because he does not reject the Catholic faith while he denounces Catholic practices that his career awakens such deep and respectful interest. Let us try not to spoil his work, whatever that work may be, by an insane haste to make him speak before he is ready. If we do, we shall find that our impatient reformer is changed into a mere tempestuous polemic. He is not the first foreign ecclesiastic who has sought refuge in America from possible persecution and annoyance. Achilli and Gavazzi, and a score of others have preached to passionate audiences hatred of the Man of Sin, and gratitude that Providence has preserved them from the thralldom of the Scarlet Woman. Whatever benefit may have resulted from the eloquence of these ardent converts, the excitement of their coming has generally awakened more or less bad temper and violence. But the arrival of the new reformer is not in the whirlwind or the storm. Men are not quite certain that this is a reformer. The voice which has been lifted up in the church of Notre Dame against the sins of modern Christianity, the selfishness of the churches, and the "abhorrent sanctity" of the cloister, has been heard from one end of Europe to the other, and its echoes have resounded across the Atlantic; yet we hardly know what manner of voice it is, whether it is the voice of the apostle of a new faith, or merely the cry of a suffering priest, to be hushed as so many cries have been before, when the heart that uttered them knew not fully its own wants, and at last sought refuge in the negation of all faith like Lamennais, or found comfort in submission like Lacordaire. We know not whether to hail Father Hyacinthe as a good son of the ancient faith, or a second Luther, who is to lead another great rebellion. He professes to be still a firm believer in the Roman Catholic creed; yet the Roman Catholic Church has cast him out, and it is not easy to understand how, upon the principles of that creed, he can question the infallibility of a general council and yet avow himself Catholic, or how he can stay in the Church if the Church will not keep him. But men are not always logical in religious any more than in other matters, and the Protestant clergymen who have listened to take the unfrocked Carmelite by the hand may perhaps regret their rashness if it prove that he is very far from making common cause with them.

The true explanation of this uncertainty we believe to be that Father Hyacinthe has no distinct purpose for the future, and does not himself know exactly how he stands. In America he has been treated as the Roman pontiff, and deliberated upon his course with less embarrassment than in France, and here perhaps, if we only let him alone, he may find the rest which his native land denies him. Yet he is a man of more than common strength of intellect and fixity of purpose if our countrymen, in their wild pursuit of celebrities, do not drive him into some uncomfortable theological corner, from which it will be harder to get out than to walk away from the Carmelite convent in Paris.

FISH AND SEWARD.

"After the election of General Grant to the Presidency, there were not a few friends of Mr. Seward who indulged the hope that his services would be retained under the new administration, and that the momentous international questions which had arisen during his direction of affairs would continue to have the benefit of his masterly mind and great experience. But General Grant allowed the Secretary to retire from the State Department.

"Whether with a view of leading Mr. Seward back into the Cabinet, or from a chivalric feeling towards a rival candidate for the White House, it is certain that the volume containing the speeches which Mr. Seward has recently delivered in Sika and in the Pacific States has just been distributed among a number of distinguished personages in Washington, under the auspices of General Grant himself.

"That Mr. Seward, if he had continued to be at the head of the Cabinet, would have saved the foreign relations of the Government from the chaos into which they have been plunged by the present advisers of General Grant, few students of the late premier's Mexican and European policy will be inclined to doubt. Nor can it be questioned that from the beginning of the Cuban war of independence he would have upheld before Spain, and her European allies, the principle of American supremacy in the American hemisphere, in such unmistakable terms as to crush out the more or less tacit coalition against the extension of free institutions in the Antilles, which has exerted such a baleful and intimidating influence upon Mr. Fish's morose though well-meaning tactics. Under all the aspects of the case, General Grant's overture to Mr. Seward may be regarded as a bright spot in that total eclipse of genius which has characterized the foreign policy of the administration."—N. Y. Sun.

The friends of Mr. Seward have been, since his departure from Auburn on his present travels, diligent in the prediction that he would return home the most popular man in the nation. They have flattered themselves that absence, accompanied by speeches from the departed and judicious announcement by telegraph of his movements, would, by a kind of reflex action, awaken the people to meditation upon his virtues, bring about his recall, and in the Department of State, and a general revision of the judgment, respecting him and his career, already pronounced. We had supposed that all this coming change of opinion in respect to Mr. Seward was anticipated by his admirers with joy, growing solely out of foresight of what a pleasure would thereby be given to the years of retirement of the late Secretary of State; but we evidently saw through a glass darkly, for it now appears that he is a candidate for office, and that President Grant is playing around the edges of the Seward plot by patronizing the distribution of speeches of the latter among "distinguished personages in Washington."

There are circumstances in the case of the Sun which make it seem an organ of Mr. Seward, his friends, and the great majority of both. Of course, before Seward can be got into the State Department, Secretary Fish must be got out. Hence the assaults upon the administration of the latter, which have been open in the Sun, and in the Times (another Seward organ), a realization of the tactics sketched by Pope in the well-known lines:—"Damn with faint praise, assent with civil leer, And without sneering, teach the rest to sneer, Willing to wound, and yet afraid to strike, Just hint a fault, and hesitate dislike."

Of course, this is a Republican family quarrel in which Democrats take no part. If Republicans in this State see fit to calumniate Mr. Fish in the interest of Mr. Seward, it is their own affair. And so it is if President Grant makes himself busy in distributing Seward's speeches with intent to show his preference as between two public men of New York. The friends of Mr. Fish and of course, respectively have their own appreciation of the affair. In like manner, the assertion of Seward's friends that the foreign relations of this Government have been plunged into "chaos" since he left the Department of State, must by Democrats be looked upon as a matter they are not called upon to investigate in order to decide, if there really be a "chaos" there, whence it came. As to Seward's upholding "the principle" of American supremacy on this hemisphere in relation to the Cuban revolt, if he were Secretary of State, so as to crush the "tacit coalition against the extension of free institutions in the Antilles," which have "exerted such a baleful and intimidating influence" upon Mr. Fish—that is rubbish. The only conspicuous fact about the conduct of the members of the administration in Cuban matters is that Grant has based most of the time under the influence of Cuban refugees, who, with no thought for the duty and material interests of the United States, have impelled him to talk and advise in the interest of the insurrection, just as Corbin talked and advised in the interest of the gold ring under the guise of seeking the best interest of the Treasury. Mr. Fish, on the other hand, seems to have considered that his first duty was not to Cubans, but to the interests of the people of the United States, and that all such matters as Cuban belligerence and the like were things of private concern as between the citizens of this country and its Government, about which there was no need of the advice or menace of interloping foreigners without courage to take personal part in winning the independence on the field of battle. If the solicitude of Grant for Cubans and Fish for Americans be evidence of "chaos," then it exists; but how would Seward's presence dispel it unless he fell into the policy of the President?

As to Mr. Seward, his constant, persistent, shameless violation of the rights of individual liberty, in the persons of Northern men, while he was Secretary of State; his indecently hasty striking of our colors and surrendering to the insolent seven-day demand of England in the Trent affair; his utter abandonment of our real rights and grievance in the Johnson-Clarendon treaty, after having for two years absurdly vexed and teased Earl Russell nearly to death about the asserted offense to us of recognizing the rebels as belligerents; and the general perception of the country that the successful conduct of our affairs with France and England during the critical period of the rebellion was mainly due to the conspicuous good sense of Messrs. Dayton and Adams, and not to the verbose and elementary despatches from the State Department, will effectually prevent him from accomplishing a reversal of the existing popular judgment.

If, however, President Grant has determined to differ with Mr. Fish as to the true policy of the country in respect to certain foreign questions, or, for any other reason, to get rid of the latter to make room for Mr. Seward, it is some consolation to reflect that he is braiding a rope whereof his own neck would in due time be stretched.

MR. SEWARD IN MEXICO.

From the N. Y. Herald.

No other foreigner has ever evaded from the Mexican Government such an ovation as that with which Mr. Seward, our venerable ex-Secretary of State, is welcomed to the halls of the Montezumas. President Juarez, in whose name he was formally welcomed when he landed on the 7th instant at Manzanilla, amidst roaring salutes from the forts, is manifestly not ungrateful. It was the policy of Secretary Seward which inspired the instructions forwarded in October, 1866, by General Sheridan to General Sedgwick, and which determined the destiny of Juarez as well as that of Emperor Maximilian and other competitors for power in Mexico—instructions which, said General Sheridan, "will be enforced against the advances of the imperial bureaucrats representing the so-called imperial Government of Mexico, and also against Ortega, Santa Anna, and other factions. President Juarez is the acknowledged head of the liberal government in Mexico." This amounted to a virtual recognition of the position which Juarez still maintains.

Mr. Seward will doubtless have accorded to him all possible facilities for studying the present political, religious, social, and material condition of Mexico, and for discovering its future prospects. If he had not already exhausted all the resources of rhetoric in his voluminous eulogistic descriptions of the

glories of Alaska, with its marvellous climate, its vast supplies of furs and seal skins, and its spontaneous growth of ice cream, sherberts, Roman punch, and other similar "vegetables," Mr. Seward might be expected to favor the world with equally voluminous and eulogistic descriptions of Mexico. In this case, at least, he would not be compelled to draw on his imagination for his facts, and General Thomas could not contradict any statement, however apparently extravagant, which he might make. Mexico is one of the finest and richest countries on which the sun ever shines. Mr. Seward might endlessly prolong the report which he could give even if he were to restrict himself to the porphyritic mountains which wall in the plain of Tenochtitlan, whereon stands the capital of Mexico. It would be pleasant to learn from him the remote connections between this volcanic circle formed by Popocatepetl, Elaciocuatl, Toluca, and other smoking chains of smaller volcanoes, and the other volcanic wonders in the East Indies and elsewhere in which he has taken a special interest. Nor could he be suspected of being indifferent to the progress of the various railways which are yet to replace some of the good old roads laid out in various directions by the most distinguished of the Mexican viceroys, the Count de Rivella-Gigedo. Railway enterprises, emigration schemes, and many other Mexican jobs would offer a more practical interest than the study of Mexican picture writing, or Mexican history from the times of the Toltecs and their successors, the Chichimecs, the Aztecs, the Tezcucans, the Tapanecs, and the Aztecs under the Mexicomes, to the days of Spanish viceroys, and the revolutionary priests Hidalgo and Morelos, and the native Mexican Emperor Iturbide, and the often broken succession of republican Presidents, and the Franco-Austrian Emperor Maximilian and President Juarez. The mineral wealth of Mexico and the fauna and flora of the three regions into which the country is naturally divided—*tierras calientes*, *tierras templadas*, and *tierras frías*—would supply abundant topics for a book on Mexico, should Mr. Seward be tempted to write one. Perhaps he had better reserve Alaska as a subject for a descriptive poem until he can disprove the testimony of General Thomas that there is more poetry than truth in the imaginative ex-Secretary's speeches on that theme. If his prophecies had not sometimes turned out to be by no means infallible, we should like to have him predict how soon Mexico will probably become one of the United States of America.

HOW THE MONEY GOES IN CONGRESS.

From the N. Y. Times.

A well-known contributor to the *Atlantic Monthly* calls attention to the waste of public money which goes on in and around Congress. He condemns the pictures under the dome and elsewhere, in common with most other critics who have any cultivated taste to boast of. He is severe in his remarks upon the young lady who managed to cajole Congressmen into awarding her a large sum of money, in advance, for executing a "statue" of President Lincoln. Mr. Parton does not give us his impressions of the clay model prepared by the young lady in question. Perhaps he did not see it. Those who did will sincerely hope that it will be some time before the statue itself is finished.

What puzzles our contemporary most is the charge made for carrying on the daily work of Congress. A session costs the country \$4,000,000—a good round sum, considering the little we get for it. Each day entails upon us an expense of \$23,000. But there is something more than this to wonder at if we look into the details. The Fortieth Congress used up nearly eleven hundred penknives, costing about three dollars each, and, of course, the members did not pay for them. The country is so rich, and has so few taxes to pay, that prodigality in Congress is a venial fault. Besides penknives, such necessary articles as snuff, tobacco, pocket scissors, hair-brushes, and "extra moroccos," have been furnished by a grateful nation to its representatives. Among the items is this very startling one—"12 cotton stay-laces, \$6." Can such things be? We presume the stay-laces were not clear at that price, but is there no dark mystery concealed under the supply of them? Does some intelligent patriot keep his family in such articles at the cost of his country? Or does Congress give stay-laces to "sculptresses," as well as money for European tours? Or is there a Congressman somewhere in the background who is proud of his figure, and has revived the old custom of wearing stays to keep it in shape? Let us have a committee on the subject. The "revelations" would be a change on the usual style of such reports.

It costs \$214.45 to transport the body of a defunct Congressman to his home, and that when the distance is only short. The people may well hope to survive their term of office. They ought to be examined by a medical man before being put on the nomination ticket. Sometimes there is a "call of the House," and absent members have to be hunted up from all parts. The Sergeant-at-Arms is allowed to charge \$5.20 for every trunk whom he captures. How his heart must rejoice when a prolonged "filibustering" movement is going on, and the majority of members go home to bed! He may bring up a hundred in one day, and thus bag \$520 as his perquisites. Stationery is an article which most members of Congress use by the cartload. Has Mr. Parton ever made a tour of the rooms of our legislators during the session? If so, he ought not to be so much at a loss, as he says, to account for the enormous quantity consumed. There are many ways of getting rid of good writing paper.

Our contemporary advises the abolition of all the allowances now given to members of Congress; and the substitution of one fixed sum as salary instead. The "franking privilege" is the first abuse that ought to be put an end to. Now a Congressman may send almost anything under his frank, from a stailace to a pair of top-boots. It amounts to nothing more nor less than a wholesale robbery of the nation—somebody must pay everything that a Congressman uses, and of course the poor taxpayer is the victim. The *Atlantic* says that other nations are no better off than we—but two blacks don't make a white. Will Congress reform itself, or wait until an indignant people takes it in hand?

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